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NEWS RELEASE

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Mt. Hope High School Assistant Principal Receives \$25,000 Milken Award

BRISTOL – In a surprise ceremony today (Tuesday, November 17, 2009) at Mt. Hope High School, Governor Donald L. Carcieri and Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist presented the Milken Family Foundation 2009 Milken Educator Award to Jaime Crowley, an assistant principal at the school.

Mr. Crowley began his teaching career at Mt. Hope 12 years ago, as a French teacher and chair of the world-languages department. He became assistant principal two years ago. A resident of Newport, he holds both a B.A. and M.A. from Boston College, as well as a secondary-school teaching certification from URI.

“Jaime Crowley is recognized as a results-driven leader who has earned the respect and admiration of teachers, students, and administrators,” said Governor Carcieri, who presided over the ceremony and presented the award to Mr. Crowley. “In just two years as assistant principal at Mt. Hope High School, he has had a tremendous impact on student performance and retention of students who are most at risk for dropping out.

“Mr. Crowley is adept at using data to drive solutions,” the Governor continued. “Using assessment results to identify the needs of students who are in danger of dropping out, he worked with faculty to address current needs of at-risk students while improving incoming freshmen’s understanding of high-school-level expectations. At the same time, he has convened task forces to develop a new multi-disciplinary Comprehensive Assessment Program and a new writing protocol. The results have been impressive, with a lower dropout rate, higher graduation rate, and increasing test scores.”

“Every school must have highly effective leadership in order to be a high-performing learning community,” said Patrick A. Guida, vice-chair of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. “Jaime Crowley is truly a highly effective leader. He understands the importance of listening to other perspectives, he mentors students who are at risk, teachers respond to his energy, and students like him and trust him. On behalf of the Board of Regents, I congratulate him on receiving this well-deserved honor.”

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“Jaime Crowley is known to all as a visionary leader who is here for the students,” said Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “He will take that extra step to help students – raising money to buy a prom dress for a student in need, arranging in-school tutoring for a student in danger of dropping out. He has focused on transforming education at Mt. Hope through the workshop model, in which teachers don’t lecture but become facilitators in the learning process. He has made the school-improvement team at Mt. Hope one of the strongest in the state. His colleagues who recommended him for this award all rated him as ‘truly exceptional,’ and one added: ‘I don’t need 2 seconds to think about this.’ Jaime is a wonderful example of a highly effective leader whose work will inspire educators across Rhode Island.”

“In shining a spotlight on exceptional educators such as Mt. Hope High School assistant principal Jaime Crowley, the Milken Educator Awards say, in a very public way, that excellence in education should be recognized and rewarded,” said Dr. Jane Foley, senior vice president of the Milken Educator Awards and a 1994 Indiana Milken Educator. “Our nation’s future rests in the hands of today’s educators. In heralding early to mid-career educators, the Milken Family Foundation honors recipients not only for what they have achieved, but for the promise of what else they will accomplish.”

The award, which comes with an unrestricted payment of \$25,000, honors exceptional educators for their work. Each recipient receives the award in a surprise ceremony; educators do not apply for the award, nor are they aware that they have been nominated for the honor.

More than 50 educators around the country will receive Milken Family Foundation 2009 Milken Educator Awards this month. The program has been administered in Rhode Island since 1990, and there have been 68 Milken Award winners so far in the state.